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## Planning model for Peruvian university system

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### Abstract

This paper arises from observing the effect that the education policy has had on the European Higher Education Area that promotes the primary objective of this research: the preparation of a planning model that contributes, based on the European experience, the basic elements for the quality of higher education in Peru. To appraise the timeliness and usefulness of the aforementioned model, the scope of the Spanish model is selected and specifically adapted to the Peruvian model, which can be considered a testing laboratory due to their historical, cultural and social similarities and in which the model offers a response to the society's need for quality education.

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### 1. Background: Universities in Peru and around the world

The Peruvian university model was created as an extension of the Spanish model (Rodriguez, 1972), with a dominant model of social reform, in the 80s through University Act No. 23733, and State control, that is, the responsibility of the State for university matters, was delegated to the National Assembly of Rectors<sup>1</sup>, granting more autonomy to universities.

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<sup>1</sup> ANR (National Assembly of Rectors), public autonomous organization. Its functions include, among others: a) to study, coordinate and guide the activities of universities; b) to assess and render a favorable decision for the creation of graduate schools or divisions of the same nature; c) to inform, upon request of the Legislative Branch, in the cases of creation, merger and suppression of public or private universities.

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Peruvian universities have improved considerably during the last years, but the university system still has many shortcomings as a result of attributing to the ANR the responsibility for responding to the civil society's demand, not very committed and with no adequate resources to do it. The creation of the National Council for University Operation Authorization)<sup>2</sup> and Legislative Decree No. 882 have resulted in an expansion of the supply of universities (INEI, 2010, page 19) in response to the increase of the demand in the admission to universities for higher studies (ANR, 2011), and in some cases there have been defects in quality control and relevance of qualifications due to the endogamy of ANR and CONAFU.

Said expansion phenomenon has caused an imbalance in university quality systems (Rojas-Revoredo, 2007), as well as consistency problems with respect to the proliferation of careers with low labor demand (Yamada, 2007). Therefore, the explanations of this phenomenon have focused on the interplay of economic supply and demand, which is characteristic of the field of economics (Diaz, 2009); and on the preparation of legal rules and regulations, in the field of law, in addition to policies, which have been promoting the creation of new universities (Cuenca, 2014) (Fig. 1.).

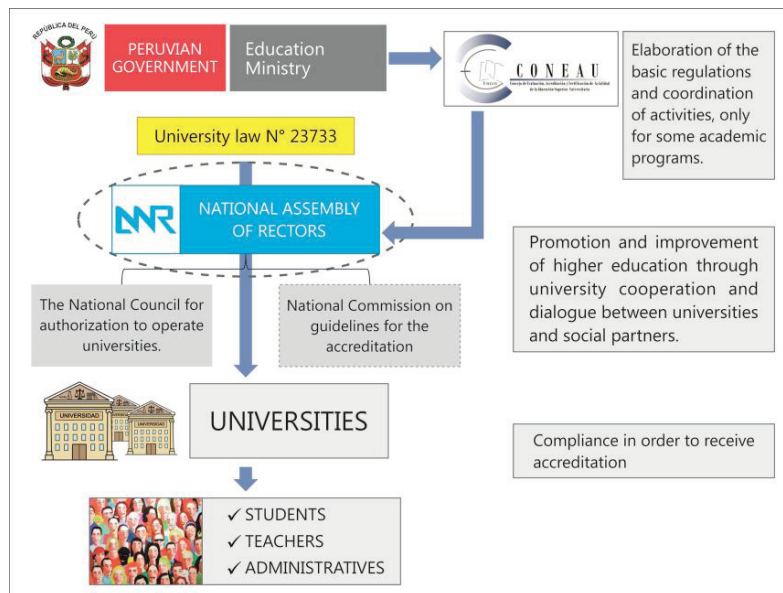


Fig. 1. Model of social reform of the Peruvian university

Undergraduate and graduate programs timidly introduce research projects as a requirement for graduation, when the global trend is toward research universities that give solutions to the real problems of society (Bleiklie & Kogan, 2007), with an intensified competition measured through rankings or other tools (Stensaker & Gortnitzka, 2009), for which it is required with more intensity to have professors who hold PhD degrees (Salmi, 2013).

<sup>2</sup> CONAFU was created in 1995 as an autonomous body of the National Assembly of Rectors in order to regulate the operation of new universities. The ANR is in charge of calling the process to elect its members among former rectors of universities. Act No. 26439 confers upon CONAFU powers to grant or deny the provision authorization for operation, among others. Furthermore, this institution assesses, on a permanent basis and for the time it deems appropriate, the operation of universities, and it authorizes or denies their definitive operation. The authorization for definitive operation cannot be granted before five years have elapsed, counted as from the date of the provisional authorization for operation.

With regard to university education, the global trend is toward the actual integration of university education, the change of the role and functions of professors, new evaluative approaches, competencies, etc. (Blanco Valdés, 2013, page 66 et seq.). These global trends in education, in addition to the world phenomena such as internationalization and globalization of university higher education, are included in the Bologna Process, which seeks the transformation of the university education model of the EHEA (European Higher Education Area). This proposal has been recently implemented in Spanish Universities with its advantages and disadvantages (Pérez, 2013), which entails an increased mobility of teachers and students, as well as new policy structures for universities such as delegating the management and decision making at State level to outside agencies (independent); a clear example is ANECA (National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation) in Spain.

The Peruvian State has been responding to the quality requirements demanded by the civil society through the SINEACE (National System for Assessment, Accreditation and Certification of Education Quality), an entity created as a specialized technical body attached to the Ministry of Education. It has legal capacity of internal public law, as well as regulatory, administrative, technical and financial autonomy, and acts timidly since 2009 without mandatory force, only for some careers that the State considers essential such as Medicine, Education and Law. There is still a long way to go if the current trends of internationalization and globalization of university higher education are foreseen.

Under this perspective, this research is intended to propose a planning model within the university policy transformation process with the new Act No. 30220, the creation of SUNEDU (National Superintendency of University Studies) and the reorganization of SINEACE (Cuenca, 2014).

## **2. Proposed policy analysis model for university higher education in Peru**

An inspiring model for the Peruvian model is the recent implementation of the Bologna Process in European universities (Bologna, 1999-2010), particularly in the Spanish university model that has been taken as best practice to define the objectives of the Peruvian education policy, due to the experience that it has had toward the change to a university model that responds to the internationalization and globalization of university higher education (Salaburu, Haug, & Mora, 2011).

The Peruvian State must incorporate, according to our reality and global trends, an education policy that responds to changes of the knowledge society, to social behaviors and to globalization. Therefore, first of all, a policy for university education that responds to the university crisis in Peru is proposed, which focuses on the comparison with the specific objectives of the Bologna Process (Chiyon, Fontana, & Cazorla, 2012).

The strategy of this proposed planning model of public scope is based on an education policy with a common objective: To improve the quality of Peruvian university higher education in order to increase the employability and mobility of citizens, as well as international competitiveness of university education in Peru, with lines of action specified in four specific objectives: 1) competencies (generic and specific of the subject areas); 2) teaching, learning and assessing approaches; 3) academic credits; 4) quality of programs. It is also based on a change of policy structure methodologically founded on a policy analysis model, considering the basic characteristics of the model: a) Top-down planning; b) It is focused on decision making; c) Separation between expert knowledge and decision; d) The study of results guides the decision-making process (Fig. 2.).

For this education policy to permeate the society, it is necessary to change the policy structure of the Peruvian university system: From a social reform model to a policy analysis model. Within the conceptual principles, it is essential to define the stakeholders of the proposed planning model. The leadership exercised by these stakeholders is focused on maintaining its influence from the formality of requirements and criteria, its policy independence and its coercive capacity over the university, such that it sets the times, modes, references, forms, deadlines, etc., apart from the tastes and convenience of the main stakeholders, professors and persons responsible for the first level of leadership, and despite the very complexity of this type of change.

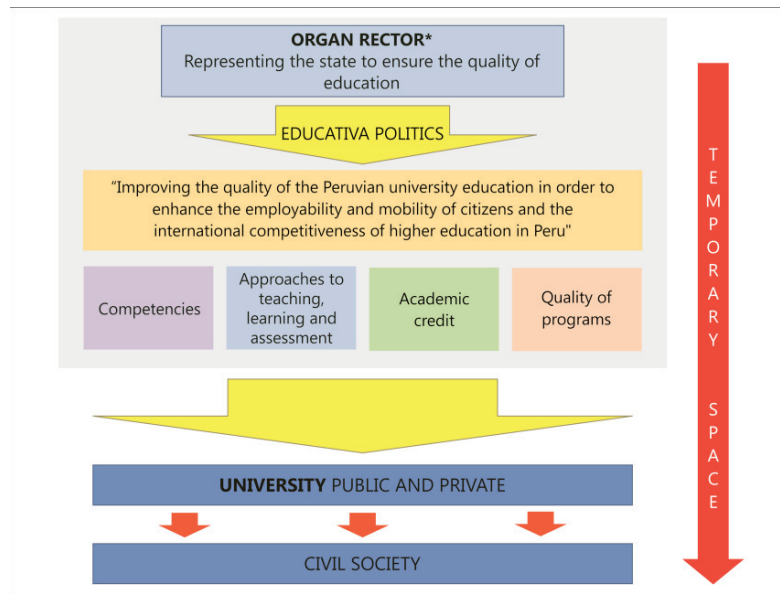


Fig. 2. Proposed education policy. Specific objectives

The proposed planning model should have the broadest consensus possible with the following stakeholders: (1) The Peruvian Government or State, (2) Outside agency for quality accreditation, (3) The rectors or rectors' associations, (4) Public and private universities. These four stakeholders constitute specific matters that characterize the policy analysis planning model (Cazorla et al., 2007) and that contribute to promoting quality, relevance and transparency of Peruvian universities and to achieving the sustained success of the projects of public scope, which in this case is university higher education. These four key stakeholders of the policy analysis model are considered for the Peruvian university model because they have been chosen based on the analyzed conceptual matters and according to the Peruvian reality which are considered essential to achieve university higher education that responds to the demands of higher education projects in the rest of the world (Fig. 3).

Therefore, the proposed model has a twofold dimension: a qualitative dimension through an education policy established with the highest policy level, which responds to the demands of society, with a common objective for the university system, as well as the specific lines of action and time horizon for its implementation, and a policy dimension with a change of social reform structure with only one decision level in a top-down structure of two levels, where the Peruvian State acts as the only responsible for responding to the demanding society as its legal representative, and to the side, so that it takes into consideration the opinion of those affected by the top-down decision making, with an outside independent agency that incorporates the education policy issued by the State and lays the foundation for practice as it is being done in many university models worldwide. The role of the new ANR (National Assembly of Rectors) should be negotiating with the State and achieving consensus with the outside accreditation agency on the implementation of the education policy in universities, where the Peruvian State reasserts its commitment to the society, ensuring that its current needs are met and offering a future outlook. In this respect, it is necessary to open to global trends and define broader objectives that integrate the Peruvian system into the global trends.

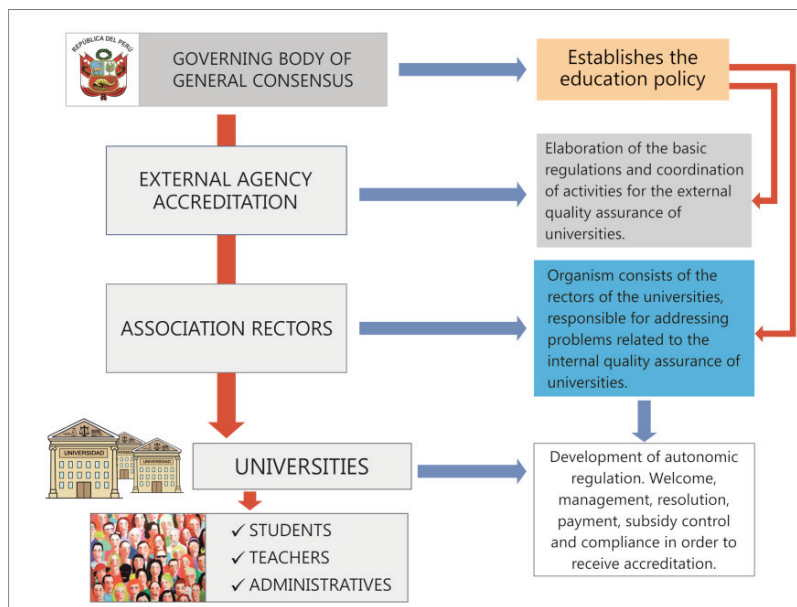


Fig.3. Actors model of policy analysis for the Peruvian university system

For the Peruvian university system, quality is an essential element in building a higher education model, provides the basis and foundation for the acknowledgment and comparability of qualifications and therefore, it is considered a matter of vital importance (CADE, 2014)<sup>3</sup>. For that purpose, universities must develop quality assurance systems and certification and accreditation mechanisms. Accreditation in the education sector is an issue that is just being addressed by the competent education authorities in our country. The outside operating agency in charge of guaranteeing university quality is currently going through a reorganization process and it must have functions such as establishing the standards, criteria and indicators for assessment and accreditation. The design of the curriculum based on competencies is fundamental for quality so it must be developed in Deans' Offices, Departments and research groups by centers or schools, taking part in projects for innovation in teaching methodology, pilot programs or strategic plans, not only for the design and academic accreditation, but also for the promotion of mobility of professors to European universities, as well as of the exchange of students, which are fundamental actions to guarantee quality.

The proposed model for the Peruvian university system seeks to promote that the system reaches its economic and social relevance when the specific objectives raised with respect to teaching, research and extension respond to the society's demands, using the resources made available by society to the maximum extent. This leads to an analysis of the State reforms and their impact on university policies, with particular attention paid to quality, innovation, mobility and subvention (Chiyon, Fontana & Cazorla, 2012).

The entire planning process is embedded in a top-down organization structure of the policy analysis. Thus, the origin of the decision is at the highest level, where the application of new education policies is raised. This research proposes a program of action of the university policy, which must be based on a common objective clearly defined for the Peruvian university system, a schedule to achieve it and a set of specific lines of action or objectives, as well as the strategies to achieve this objective such as, at present, the consolidation and effective operation of the National System for Assessment, Accreditation and Certification of Education Quality (SINEACE), as outside

<sup>3</sup> CADE. For Higher Education 2014. August 12, 13 and 14, 2014.

agency for quality accreditation, and SUNEDU as entity responsible for licensing with a system that guarantees the basic quality conditions (Fig. 4.).

In the current context, the Peruvian university system needs an autonomous organization of general consensus made up of experts, which guarantees the quality of university education. This organization is contemplated in the new University Act through the Ministry of Education, as set forth in the Political Constitution of Peru.

The application of university autonomy in Peru has assumed a very unique dimension since the enactment of University Act No. 23733, where the State put aside its regulatory, coordination and quality requirement authority with regard to the university activity, entrusting such function to the National Assembly of Rectors. The National Assembly of Rectors, which is made up of the rectors of the universities, could not have been sufficiently self-demanding with the universities themselves in order to reach quality levels according to the sustainable development that our country needs.

The new University Act No. 30220 tries to bring expert knowledge and decision-making knowledge, which are finally taken after the appropriate «analysis of policies» directly involving in the Ministry of Education the real authors of such policies: universities, professional schools, entrepreneurs and the civil society. Thus, the assessment unit becomes an element of support for decision-making teams, paying particular attention to the justification of the origin of the data provided by the outside evaluation team, as well as to the logic behind the processes established for such purpose (Cazorla, De los Rios & Salvo, 2007).

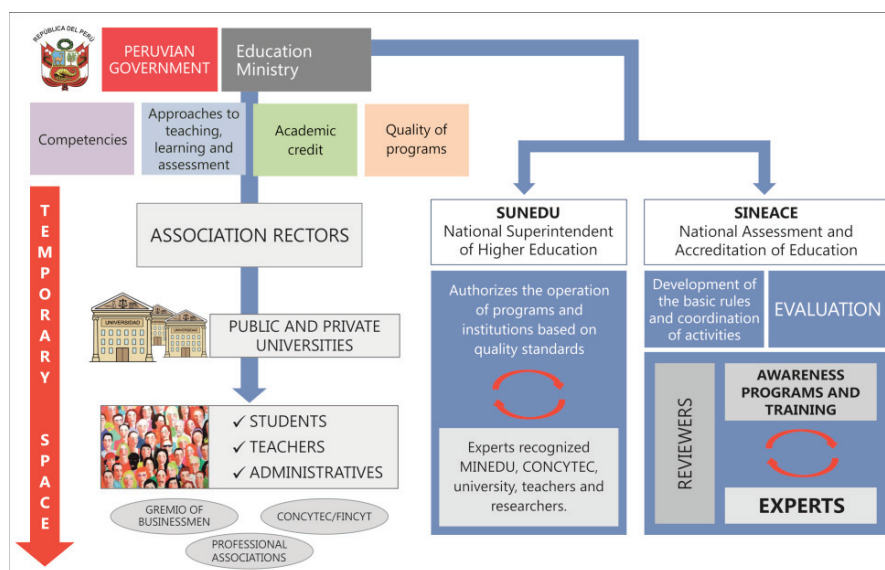


Fig.4. Proposed model for university education in Peru

### 3. Conclusions

- The main conclusion of this research is that the success and sustainability of a model for university higher education in Peru depends to a large extent on the responsibility of the Peruvian State, so that the Legislative and Executive branches enact the acts necessary for university governance. In that respect, an education policy with a common objective for the university system is required, with a schedule for change and lines of action (specific objectives) that lead Peruvian universities to respond to quality demands at national and international level. For this education policy to permeate the society it is necessary to change the planning and management model of the university system: from a social reform model to a policy analysis model. A top-down model where the Peruvian State acts as the only responsible for responding to the demanding society as its legal representative,



and to the side with an outside independent agency that incorporates the education policy issued by the State to lay the foundation for practice as it is being done in many university models worldwide. The role of the new ANR should be negotiating with the State and achieving consensus with SINEACE on the implementation of the education policy in universities, on the basis of a licensing of infrastructure and programs that guarantees a minimum level of quality for this change, through SUNEDU.

- The proposed model for the Peruvian university system is intended to make a contribution to the improvement of planning by proposing a policy structure of various levels. This governance concept of various levels, top down and to the side has extended and comprises phenomena such as internationalization and globalization. The principles of the Policy Analysis model for Peruvian universities are based on the following stakeholders: (1) The Peruvian Government or State, (2) Outside accreditation agency, (3) Rectors or rectors' association, (4) Universities and the society. The model addresses one of the main problems of Peruvian universities, which is accreditation, quality certification and assessment.
- The model for Peruvian university higher education is a panoramic outlook of the requirements of an Education Policy for consistency of the Peruvian University System which have distinguished from improvements for efficiency and relevance of university higher education in the society and in the economy, and particularly for competitiveness of each university in the world. This process of change for the Peruvian university system is responsibility as purpose of the governance of universities itself, to the extent that they are free to act in order to improve the role that they play in society with criteria and indicators that can be assessed separately.
- The new University Act provides framework guidelines on the operation of universities, leaving universities free to design their own qualifications for both undergraduate and graduate studies. This model proposes that once the university education policy is approved, universities, through their rectors and with the support of SINEACE, conduct the studies and useful practical cases for the design of undergraduate and graduate qualifications adapted to the model. It is a non-binding proposal, with value as instrument for careful consideration, which would be submitted to the Public Organization of Consensus and to the Ministry of Education for information and consideration.
- The modernization process of university higher education and of research (in the sense of I+D+i) in Peru, is a social and economic need demanded for the future welfare of the population and the country, not a mere submission to an education policy. They are realities related to the need of increasing the social relevance of what is studied and researched, the efficiency of university studies, the effective autonomy of universities and their differentiation, as well as their recognition and prestige in Peru and worldwide. These matters are proposed by the Peruvian university higher education model.

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